

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 17-19 being independent. Claims 1, 5, 7-9, 11 and 14-17 have been amended and Claim 20 has been added herein merely to place the claims in better form for consideration. The changes have not been made for any reasons related to patentability.

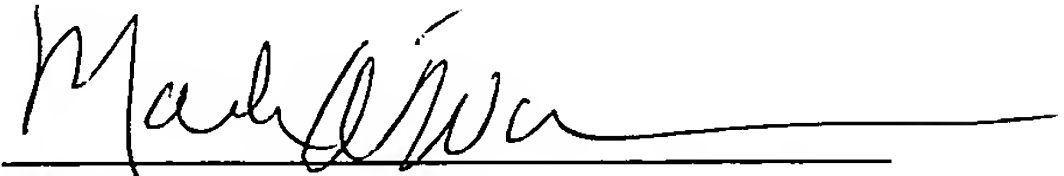
Applicants respectfully traverse the election of species requirement set forth in the Office Action. A careful review of the specification reveals that the two alleged species are closely related and do not require separate fields of search. Accordingly, neither Applicants nor the Patent and Trademark Office should be put to the trouble and expense entailed in multiple filing and prosecution. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the public at large should not be required to obtain and study several patent documents in order to have available all of the issued patent claims covering the invention.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.143, Applicants provisionally elect Species 1, directed to Figure 7. It is respectfully submitted that at least Claims 1-5 and 8-20 read on the elected species. Moreover, because the Office Action states that Claim 1 is generic, should Claim 1 be allowed, Claims 6 and 7 should be rejoined and also allowed. Favorable consideration is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the election of species requirement set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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